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Merry Christmas!

A Winter Day

'Tis Christmas again and once more as before
We hang up the holly outside the front door
The hills and valleys are covered with snow,
Brushed with crystals of ice that glow
From towering trees, from shrubs, each tiny strand
Glistens in winter's fairyland.
The snow, like a veil, drawn across earth's face,
Falls from each branch like frothy lace
And the wind fingers lightly hill and plain,
Chanting a soft cathedral strain;
Through the windowed trees, the sun's clear, bright gaze
Cloaks the world in a golden haze,
Transforming this earthly vision of ice
To reflection of Paradise.
'Tis Christmas again and once more as before
We hang up the holly outside the front door.

—MARGARET PHILLIPS SUCCOP

The search for the Christmas Star

The children particularly look forward to the most popular Christmas play, *Reisen til Julestjernen* (The Search for the Christmas Star), annually staged by the Norwegian National Theatre in Oslo, as well as in several other theatres throughout the country.

It tells of a king and queen who had one beautiful little princess named Sonja Gulltopp. One day she was kidnapped by thieves.

Her mother, the Queen, died of sorrow, and when Christmas came the King felt so lonely that he could not stand the sight of the Christmas Star shining above the palace. He banished the Star, and it disappeared from the sky.

Several years passed, and the princess had still not been found.

One day some wise star-gazers came to the King. They had read in the stars that if only the Christmas Star shone again the little princess would also reappear.

The King now offered a great reward for the one who could locate the Christmas Star and make it shine again.

Once again thieves broke into the castle and among them was a young girl dressed in rags. They were caught, but the King felt sorry for the girl and let her go. She was so thankful that she promised to find the Christmas Star.

She set out on the search and had many adventures and difficulties, but made friends with all the birds and animals in the forests, who helped her when she was in trouble.

One day she heard beautiful music and bells ringing in the forest. It was Christmas Eve; she knelt in the snow and prayed and unfastened a golden heart from around her neck. It had once been given to her by her mother, and she now offered to give it to the Christmas Star if it would only shine again.

The miracle happened! While angels were singing, the bright Christmas Star slowly descended into the hands of the young girl. She carried it carefully to the palace, again helped by the animals. She even had a ride with the North Wind, visiting the home of Father Christmas, just as he was busy with wrapping all the Christmas presents for all the children in the world.

Finally the girl could give the Star to the King, and he then recognized the girl as his long-lost daughter.

The Christmas Star ascended again into the heavens, shining brighter than ever before.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A NEW YEAR OF UNSURPASSED

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from

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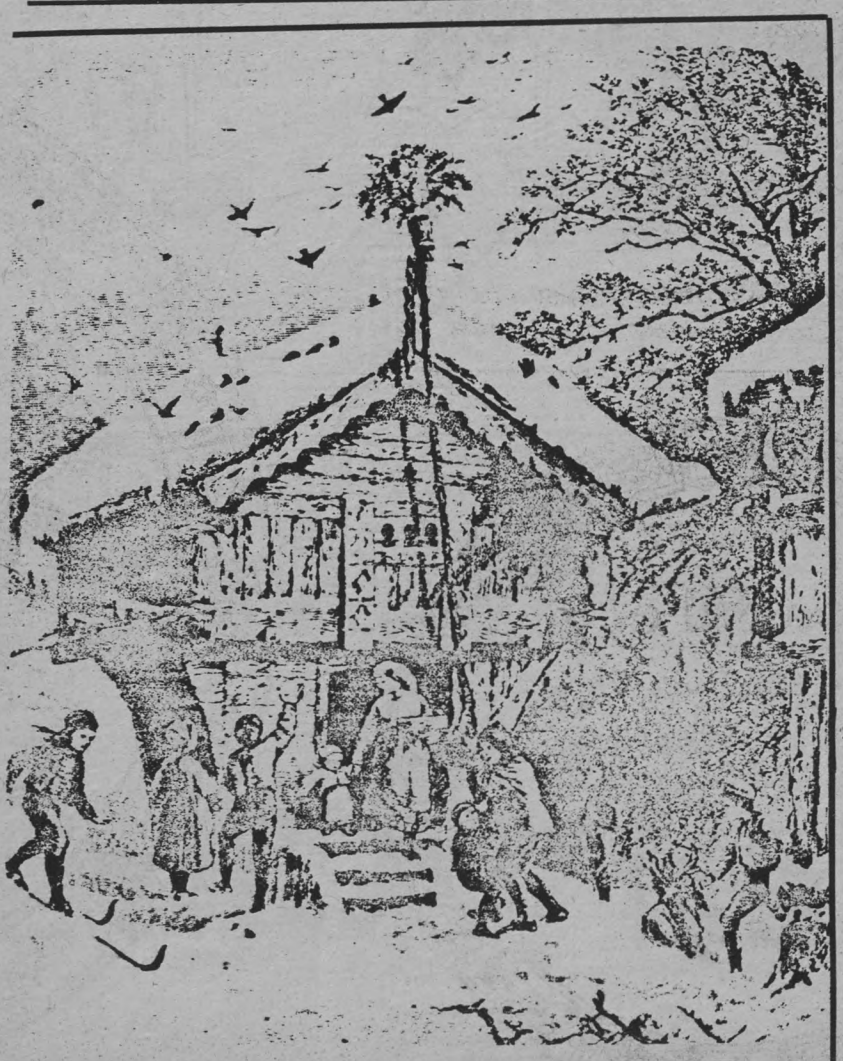

A Christmas tree for the birds is traditional in Scandinavian countries

Scandinavian Centre News

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Tomten

Midvinternattens köld är hård,
stärnorna gnistra och glimma.
Alla sova i enslig gård
djupt under midnatt-stimma.
Månen vandrar sin tysta ban,
snön lyser vit på fur och gran,
snön lyser vit på taken.
Endast tomten ar vaken.

Står där så grå vid ladgårdsdörr,
grå mot den vita driva,
tittar, som många vintrar förr,
upp emot månens skiva,
tittar mot skogen, där gran och fur
drar kring gården sin dunkla mur,
grubblar, fast ej det lar båta,
over en underlig gåta.

För sin hand genom skägg och hår,
skakar huvud och hätta —
"nej, den gåtan ar alltför svår,
nej, jag gissar ej detta" —
slår, som han plågar, inom kort
slika spörjande tankar bort,
går att ordna och pyssla,
går att skota sin syssla.

—Victor Rydberg

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In 1904 Einar Holboll, then a post office clerk in Denmark, originated the idea of the Christmas seal. A Danish immigrant, Jacob A. Riis, brought the idea to the United States and made it known through an article in a magazine called 'The Outlook'.

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Celebrations in Sweden

The Christmas celebration in Sweden really begins on December 13th, St. Lucia Day.

On that day one of the daughters in each family, chosen as St. Lucia, dresses in a white dress with a red sash and wears a crown of lighted candles. She is an important figure in planning the family's Christmas festivities and her first duty that morning is to bring her family coffee and freshly-baked buns for breakfast in bed.

St. Lucia is a legendary figure representing innocence and virtue. Legend has it that in the early days of Christianity there lived in Sicily a lovely girl of seventeen named Lucia. She was betrothed and her family had consigned a large dowry. The day before the wedding, however, Lucia's mother became very ill. Lucia prayed to God, promising that if her mother was spared she would give the entire dowry to the poor. The mother recovered, and Lucia was true to her promise.

But her husband-to-be, furious and refusing to go through with the wedding, betrayed Lucia to the army, which in that time was persecuting the Christians, and poor Lucia was burned at the stake.

Soon thereafter people began 'seeing' Lucia here and there. She appeared in many places, always doing kind things for the underprivileged.

In Sweden one bitterly cold night of December 13th centuries ago she is supposed to have appeared before hundreds of cold and hungry people. The Swedish people came to love Lucia, the 'Queen of Light' as they called her, and December 13th has become the day marking the beginning of the Christmas season.

CHRISTMAS EVE IMPORTANT

Christmas Eve is perhaps the most important period of the yule season. There is almost always snow on the ground when the members of the family gather for the thrilling evening of laughter and worship. They usually exchange gifts early in the evening and at eleven o'clock attend the midnight service at the church. Then they return home for a great feast, the most beautiful dinner of the year amid lovely table decorations and candles in brightly-coloured candelabras. The dinner traditionally features a popular dish known as lutefisk. After dinner they sing carols around the Christmas tree and the children are permitted to stay up as late as they like on this wonderful night.

NO SANTA CLAUS

There is no Santa Claus in Sweden, but rather a merry old gentleman known as the *Tomteguben* who looks very much like our Santa. He neither comes by sleigh nor slides down chimneys; instead he just appears from nowhere on Christmas Eve with a sack of presents on his back for the children.

CHRISTMAS DAY

On Christmas morning at six everyone goes to an early church service known as *Jul-otta*. The church is beautifully lighted with candles, and the music drifts out over the snow as the people approach the church. After the service they remain to have coffee together and exchange greetings. Then they return to their homes — some to take a long nap, others to visit, and still others to begin preparations for the big dinner which is the highlight of Christmas Day.

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and
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A Finnish Christmas

As remembered by
by Anja Saburi

To a child Christmas is a very special time.

When I was small, we lived in Finland, and like all children all over the world, I anticipated Christmas with eagerness, and perhaps with a little nervousness; if one had not been good throughout the year, Joulupukki — or Santa Claus — would not bring gifts.

Christmas in Finland begins early in December with Pikkujoulu being celebrated at that time. Then come the Christmas concerts at schools and community halls. And finally — Christmas!

To me the whole month of December was a really exciting time.

First of all, everyone looked so secretive, and when the time came for the major cleaning up of the house before Christmas — when the whole house is cleaned and washed from the farthest corner of the basement right through the attic — my mother never let me help to clean the attic. I always wondered why I wasn't allowed up there.

The cooking of Christmas goodies began well in advance. Joulukinkku (ham), different casseroles, and the cookies had to be done in advance. Joulupulla was really something special — mother even put raisins in it — and of course, Christmas would not be perfect without Riisipuuro and Rusinasoppa.

On Christmas eve, when the whole house was spic and span and the aroma of good cooking filled the house, my father would go up in the attic and get down a big old suitcase which held all the glimmer and sparkle of the Christmas tree decorations. Then he and I would take the sled and an axe and go to the nearby forest to look for the perfect Christmas tree which, although it had been chosen well beforehand, always seemed to be hard to find because the forest looked so different with lots of snow weighing down the spruce branches. While we were looking for our tree we had a lot of fun sneakily trying to shake snow down on each other.

The tree was decorated during the afternoon, and it always looked superb with real candles, apples hanging from the branches, cookie and candy decorations among those that had been bought from the store years before.

And then came the waiting — and that was the hard part!

I wanted Joulupukki to come! But no ..... Joulusauna was one of the traditions that was always followed, and to a child it was a long, long wait from Christmas eve dinner until the sauna was over and everyone sat looking out the window watching for a sled pulled by reindeer from which a scary-looking (it always seemed to me) Joulupukki would emerge with a bag full of gifts.

Somehow I always missed seeing the sled and reindeer, and to this day I regret that I didn't go out to look behind the shed when Joulupukki one year invited me to go see his northern vehicle which he said was parked there.

It was always very late before we went to bed on Christmas eve, but somehow it was never difficult to wake up early to go to church on Christmas Day. And even now, while singing the words *En etsi valtaa loistoa, en kaipaa kultaakaan, vaan pyydan taivaan valoa ja rauhaa paalle maan,* it makes me think — wouldn't it be lovely to have peace on earth throughout the year?

After church the rest of the day was spent at home with the family. But on Boxing Day it seemed to me that since everyone went visiting it was truly a wonder that they found anyone home. The day was spent visiting friends and neighbours.

The Christmas tree was taken down on Loppiainen — two weeks after Christmas — and the big suitcase was put back in the attic to await the next happy Christmas.

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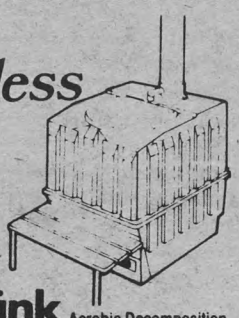

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jo pirtteihin pienoisihin.
Mutt ylhaalla orressa viela on vain
se hakki, mi sulkee mun sirkuttajain.
Ja vaiennut vaikerrus on vankilan.
Ah, murheita muistaa ken vois laulajan.

Sa tahdista kirkkain, nyt loisteesi luo
sinne suomeeni kaukaisehen.
Ja sitten kun sammuu sun tuikkeesi tuo,
sa siunaa se maa muistojen.
Sen vertaista toista en mistaan ma saa,
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Ja kiitosta sen laulu soi Sylvian
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— *Z. Topelius*

So well remembered

from the White Rock Sun

Christmas at the Big House is just one of the events 'so well remembered' by Kristiana Magnusson in her book about the pioneer days of the Icelandic community on the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

There are others, like the incidents connected with the hazardous fishing through the ice on the frozen waters of the lake, the excitement of getting a parcel of goods ordered by mail through Eaton's catalogue, the music concerts and the debates in the community hall, and the plays the young people produced.

Largely, the book, *So Well Remembered*, is a history of the Magnusson family as revealed in the diary of Magnus Magnusson who came to Canada in 1887 to eventually operate a fishing business on the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

But it is also an intimate look at the cultures and the cultures and the lives of a staunch group of people who came across the sea and have effected an impressive influence on the kaleidoscope of Canadian heritage.

"Grandma believed strongly that the good things in life were meant to be shared with others," Kristiana writes of Ingebjorg, who was Magnus' 'loving companion' throughout his life.

"Don't worry, Magnus, the good Lord will provide," she told her husband, relates Kristiana.

And provide He did, through depressions, the bankruptcy of the fish plant and the many trials and problems of a pioneer community in the early days of the Canadian West.

And despite the fact that coffee sold for 12 cents a pound and sugar at 7 cents a pound, the settlers often hung precariously to life and the community spirit that sustained them in those days is aptly revealed by the writer.

To those who have grown up in the area of Gimli, Hnausa and Riverton, the book will have special memories of *kirkjubae* and *kleinur* and maybe even *blodmor*; to others it is a well-written record of a part of Canadian history and an evening of entertaining reading.

Kristiana Magnusson and her husband, Albert, a grandson of the Magnus Magnusson who came from Iceland to create a New Iceland, make their home in White Rock but travel back each year where Albert still plays an important part in the family business.

Kristiana (nee Sigvaldason) was born in the nearby town of Arborg. Her book, *So Well Remembered*, sells for $7.95 and copies may be had by phoning 531-0597 or 531-7955, White Rock, B.C.

Although the Christmas tree did not become widely known in Sweden until the second half of the nineteenth century, there are records of a tree in a castle in Soderman and one as early as 1741, and a colourful account of one at Stockholm in 1821. However, once introduced it became popular there and in all the other Scandinavian countries, as it did in England and North America. In Sweden it is not considered good taste to overdecorate the tree.

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A smell from the Christmas kitchen

It may be because of the long, dark winter that keeps people indoors, but Scandinavian baking, which requires hours of devotion, has achieved a level unsurpassed anywhere in the world.

The most delicious things emerge from the oven. Wheat and rye bread come in the most fantastic forms: round, flat, oval, braided and ring shapes.

The variations in sweet cakes are even more incredible, not only for festive holidays, but for breakfast and coffee time — in fact, sweet cakes for every minute of the day.

Swedish and Norwegian cakes in particular are often heavily flavoured with such Eastern spices as ginger and cardamom. The tradition was probably inherited from the adventurous Vikings who voyaged along the great rivers of Russia to reach Constantinople, and returned heavily laden with priceless Eastern spices.

The finest Danish cake is, of course, Wienerbrød, or Viennese Rolls (what we know as Danish pastry), made from paper-thin, crispy layers of dough. Danish bakers apparently learned to prepare this buttery yeast dough from the Viennese, but even in Vienna people call Wienerbrød Copenhagen pastries — and it is the unique quality of famous Danish butter that gives this cake its incredible lightness.

FINNISH CHRISTMAS CAKE

JOULUKAKKU

Finnish Christmas Cake is typified by a filling of plums or prunes topped with whipped cream — actually a delectable combination. You may, if you wish, use apricot jam instead; this is another very good combination with whipped cream, but it is not traditionally Christmassy.

You Will Need—

Batter:

4 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 cup sifted white flour

Filling:

1 cup red plum jam
¼ tsp. salt
½ tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. vanilla

Topping:

1 cup heavy cream, whipped

Beat the eggs and sugar together until thick and creamy. Sift the flour with the salt and baking powder into the egg mixture; fold in until well blended.

Divide the batter between two buttered 8 or 9-inch cake pans and bake in a moderately hot oven (375 deg. F.) for 20 to 25 minutes, or just until the cakes begin to pull away from the sides of the pans. Cool on a rack.

Split each cooled cake layer into two parts. Fill the layers with the plum jam topped with a layer of the whipped cream.

Reserve some of the whipped cream to garnish the top of the cake.

Refrigerate until serving time.

ICELANDIC

RULLU PYLSA
(Lamb Roll)

You Will Need—

4½ lbs. lamb flanks, deboned but left in one piece
2 tbsp. salt
¼ tsp. saltpetre
water
½ tsp. cloves
1 tsp. allspice
½ tsp. pepper
¼ tsp. saltpetre
2 med. onions, chopped fine

Remove as much fat as possible from the flanks.

Combine the salt and ¼ tsp. of saltpetre with water to cover and soak the meat overnight in this brine.

Next day, drain and wipe dry. Lay the meat on a flat surface, boned side up.

Mix the cloves, allspice, pepper, ¼ tsp. saltpetre, and onions. Sprinkle the mixture on the meat.

Roll as you would a jelly roll. Sew ends and edge with a needle and thread. Wind a string tightly around the roll and tie.

Wrap in waxed paper and put in a plastic bag. Refrigerate for four days.

To cook — cover with boiling water and simmer for 2 hours.

Remove from water and place between two flat surfaces with weights on top and allow to cool overnight in a cool place.

Remove string and thread. Chill.

Serve sliced very thinly on brown bread.

Especially good for hors d'oeuvres for your special Christmas Party.

VINARTERTA

You Will Need—

1 cup butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
2 large or 3 small eggs
2 tbsp. cream
4½ cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. almond extract
1 tsp. cardamom seed ground fine, OR
1 tsp. vanilla

Prune Filling:

1½ lbs. prunes
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. grated lemon rind
¾ cup sugar (brown or white)
1 tsp. cinnamon

Cream butter and sugar together. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Sift dry ingredients and add to creamed mixture with flavourings and cream.

When dough is well mixed divide into 7 equal parts. Put each portion in a 12 X 7½ inch pan, smoothing with a rubber spatula or silver spoon.

Bake for 15 minutes in a 375 deg. F. oven. Carefully remove from the pan while hot (Layers are very brittle).

Cool and put together with prune filling.

To Make Filling . . . .

Simmer the prunes in water just to cover in a small saucepan. Cover tightly and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes. Drain and save the juice.

Cool and pit the prunes, then chop and return prunes and juice to the saucepan.

Add the lemon juice, rind, sugar and cinnamon.

Cook and stir until sugar is melted and prune filling is a spreading consistency. When cool spread between layers.

DANISH

WIENERBRØD
(Danish Pastries)

You Will Need—

1¼ cups cold butter
½ cup flour
2 envelopes dry yeast
½ cup warm water
½ cup cold milk
¼ cup sugar
1 egg, beaten
3¼ cups flour

Filling:

1 cup almonds or hazelnuts
1¼ cups icing sugar
2 egg whites OR
1 lightly beaten egg

Chop together cold butter and ½ cup flour; knead until the mixture sticks together. Refrigerate to harden.

Dissolve yeast in warm water, add cold milk, Stir in sugar, egg, and half the remaining flour.

Gradually add the rest of the flour, stirring constantly.

Knead the dough until smooth and shiny; set aside.

Roll butter mixture between wax paper into an oblong about 7 X 14 ins. Place on a cookie sheet; refrigerate.

Roll out dough on a lightly floured board into a square about 14 X 14 ins. Place butter oblong over half of the dough, and fold the other half over it.

Press lightly with a rolling pin; roll doubled dough in the other direction into an oblong strip.

Fold one edge of dough over 1/3 of the way and bring the other edge over the top of this. Roll again into an oblong.

Repeat the rolling and folding twice more.

Flour the board between rollings and brush off any surplus flour from the dough. If the dough shows a tendency to become sticky, discontinue the rolling and refrigerate 10 to 15 minutes, or until the dough becomes firm.

After the third folding and rolling cover dough with a clean towel and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Grind nuts. Add icing sugar and stir in enough egg white or beaten egg to make the mixture smooth and stiff.

Make pastries into desired shapes — crescents, bow knots, braids, etc., using about 1 tsp. nut filling on each.

Place pastries on buttered baking sheets and let stand about 15 minutes in a cool place.

Bake in a hot oven (400 deg.) about 15 minutes. Cool.

If desired, drizzle with confectioner's glaze.

HVIDVINSGELE
(White Wine Jelly)

You Will Need—

1 cup water
5 oz. sugar
16 leaves of gelatine OR
8 level tspns. powdered gelatine
1 pint white wine
¾ cup sweet sherry
1 - 1½ lbs. white grapes

Boil the water and sugar. Melt the gelatine with 1 tbsp. cold water and add it to the sugar and water. Stir in the white wine and the sherry.

Halve the grapes and remove seeds.

Line a wetted 7½-cup ring mold with some of the grapes and pour a little of the white wine mixture over them; leave to set before repeating the process. Continue until the mold is full and leave in a cold place to set.

Turn the jelly out onto a serving dish and serve with Vanilla Cream suace.

Dark blue grapes may be placed in the centre for garnish.

NORWEGIAN

FYLT RIBBE
(Roast Spareribs stuffed with Apples and Prunes)

You Will Need—

8 oz. prunes
3 - 4 lbs. lean spareribs OR belly of pork
1 lb. apples
1½ pts. water
salt and pepper
seasoning to taste
flour
gravy browning (optional)

Wash the prunes and soak them overnight. Remove the stones.

Ask your butcher to crack the spareribs two or three times across. Trim off any excess fat and season the meat all over with salt and pepper.

Peel, core and slice the apples and place these on the meat together with the prunes.

Roll up the meat, tie it with a string into a neat shape and place it on a rack in a roasting pan in the oven; leave it to brown before adding the water.

Baste the meat from time to time and cook for 1½ to 1¾ hours in a moderate oven (350 deg. F.)

Strain the juices from the roasting pan into a saucepan and skim off any fat. Season the juices to taste and thicken them with a little flour and water stirred to make a thin paste.

Add gravy browning if desired and continue to simmer the gravy for 4 to 5 minutes.

Serve hot, slicing the meat.

Red cabbage and glazed potatoes are usually served with this dish.

Roast spareribs are also delicious served cold and may very often be found on the smorgasbord accompanied by applesauce.

GLASERTE POTETER
(Glaze for Boiled Cold Potatoes)

You Will Need—

3 tbsp. sugar
1½ oz. butter

Melt the sugar in a frying pan and stir with a palette knife until the sugar is beginning to turn brown. Do not let it burn.

Remove the frying pan from the heat and add the butter. Stir until it melts, then add the drained, but still moist potatoes.

Toss until the potatoes are evenly glazed and golden brown. Place the frying pan over gentle heat and cook till heated through.

Serve at once.

RØDKAAL
(Red Cabbage)

You Will Need—

1 medium red cabbage (approx. 2 - 3 lbs.)
2 medium cooking apples
1 oz. butter
6 - 8 tbsp. wine vinegar
6 - 8 tbsp. water
salt and pepper
4 tbsp. red-currant jelly
2 tsp. caraway seed (optional)
sugar to taste (1 - 2 tbsp.)

Remove and discard outer coarse leaves of the cabbage, cut it in half, remove the stalk and shred the cabbage very finely.

Peel, core and grate the apples.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan over low heat. Add the cabbage and apples and toss for five minutes taking care not to scorch.

Add the vinegar, water, salt and pepper to taste, caraway seed. Cover with a lid and cook over low heat until cabbage is tender.

Add red currant jelly and sugar to taste. The cabbage should be sweet-sour.

Bring to the boil again and serve.

Red cabbage actually improves if kept for a day before

serving; just reheat it, slowly stirring from time to time.

This dish is delicious eaten cold as a garnish for open-face sandwiches.

Note: The colour of the cooked cabbage may be improved by adding a little juice from pickled beetroot.

Red cabbage is not only one of the most popular winter vegetables, but it is the one which is usually served at Christmas time. It goes particularly well with roast duck, goose or game, and also with prok dishes and sausages.

JULEKAKE
(Christmas Bread)

You Will Need—

6 cups flour
¾ cup butter
½ cup sugar
3 oz. yeast, cake or dry
1 tsp. cardamom seeds, crushed
½ lb. raisins
1¼ cups currants
1¼ cups citron, diced

Mix flour, half of the butter and sugar, the crushed cardamom in a bowl.

Heat the milk until lukewarm (dissolve the yeast in some of it). Pour into the flour mixture and mix until dough is smooth.

Add yeast and mix well. Let stand for 20 minutes.

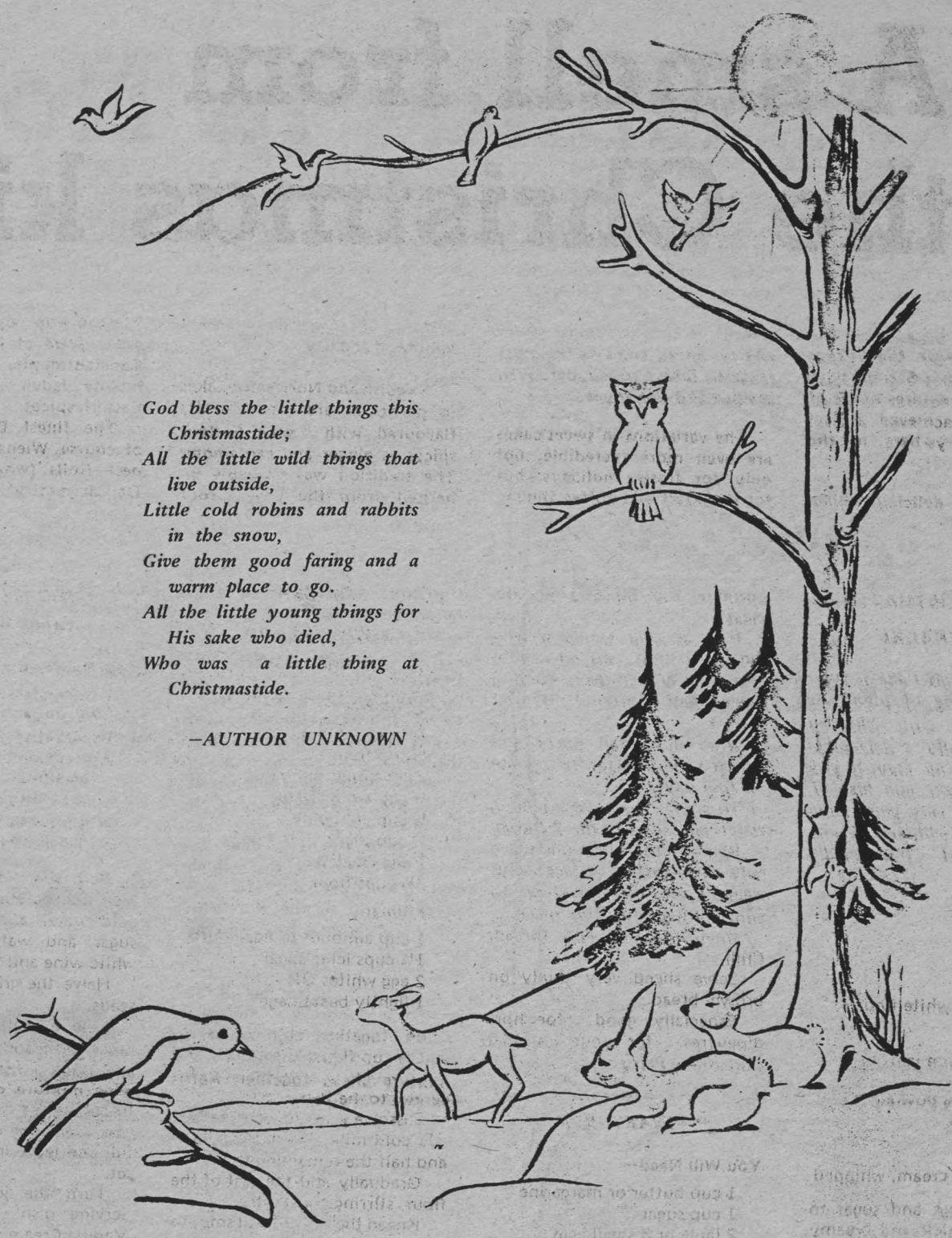
Add remainder of butter and sugar and let rise for 20 minutes longer.

Add raisins, currants and citron.

Shape into two round loaves and place on greased baking sheet. Let stand for 15 minutes.

Brush top with egg and bake in moderate oven (350 - 375 deg. F.) for 45 minutes.

Serve sliced, with or without butter.



God bless the little things this Christmastide;
All the little wild things that live outside,
Little cold robins and rabbits in the snow,
Give them good faring and a warm place to go.
All the little young things for His sake who died,
Who was a little thing at Christmastide.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

HJORTETAKK
(Hartshorns)

You Will Need—

4 egg yolks
2 egg whites
2 cups sugar
2½ oz. whipping cream
6 oz. butter
½ tsp. crushed cardamom
½ tsp. salt of hartshorn
4 cups flour, more or less

Cream eggs and sugar together until smooth.

Stir in whipped cream, melted butter, cardamom, and finally half of the flour which has been mixed with the salt of hartshorn. Cover and let stand overnight.

Next day add the remainder of the flour, or as much as is necessary to roll out dough properly.

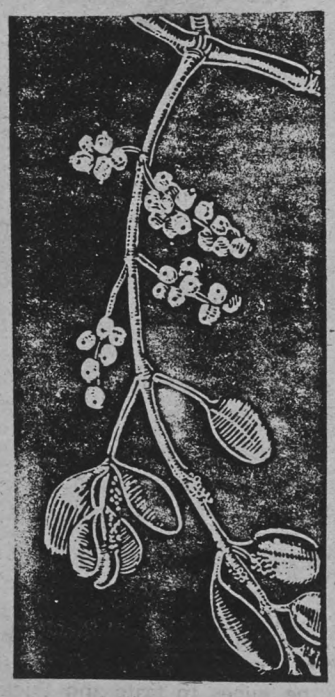
Roll into pencil-thick lengths, cut and make small rings or wreaths, overlapping ends. Make 2 or 3 incisions on the outside of rings with sharp knife.

Deep fry in hot lard. Cool on absorbent paper to drain excess grease.

Store in an airtight container.

Differing countries have different habits and customs, and the lives of people are built around these habits — also called *traditions*. It is important to keep these traditions very preciously so as to keep alive the spirit of our wonderful Canada.

AS TINY TIM SAID — "GOD BLESS EVERYONE". LET US ALL BE MERRY AT THIS WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR!



A spray of Mistletoe

THE EXECUTIVE OF THE FINNISH SOCIETY WISHES A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

HAUSKAA JOULUA JA ONNELLISTA UUTTA VUOTTA

THANKS TO OUR MANY ICELANDIC FRIENDS FOR THE GOING-AWAY PARTY AT THE SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE BEFORE OUR MOVE TO WHITEHORSE. WE APPRECIATED THE KIND WORDS AND LOVELY GIFTS, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO BEING WITH YOU AGAIN IN THE FUTURE. OUR ASSOCIATION WITH THE SOCIETY AND THE SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE MEMBERS MADE OUR 17 YEARS IN EDMONTON SO HAPPY.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY 1979 TO ALL.

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Christmas in Norway

On the seven seas and in the harbours of every continent Christmas trees are set up on the mastheads of Norwegian ships during the holiday season. And on shipboard, as in Norwegian homes all over the world, Christmas is celebrated Norwegian style — which means that it is celebrated a little differently from the way other people do it.

IN THE COUNTRY

In big country kitchens in farms and villages off the beaten track the hectic preparations still begin weeks before the festive season. The special Christmas beer, the *juleøl*, is brewed; the many traditional pork dishes are prepared; numerous kinds of small cakes (biscuits, cookies), the minimum being seven different kinds, are baked together with the *julekake*, the sweet Christmas bread filled with raisins and citron. The smell of Christmas fills the house, bringing the children's expectations to a fever pitch.

And then there is the traditional thorough housecleaning as the Holiday approaches, and the chopping of enough wood to keep the fires burning for at least the first three days of Christmas.

There is also, two days before Christmas, a trip which grandfather probably did not make: a trip to the woods to select a Christmas tree. For the Christmas tree was not introduced into Norway from Germany until the latter half of the nineteenth century; to the country districts it came even later.

Christmas Eve—

Finally, when Christmas Eve arrives, there is the decorating of the tree — done by the parents behind the closed doors of the living room, while the children are almost exploding with excitement outside.

There is also the trip to the barn with a bowl of porridge for the *nisse*, the gnome who — according to superstition — is the protector of the farm. Nowadays this ceremony is really performed for the benefit of the children, but grandmother may possibly have had an uneasy feeling that the little fellow might actually exist. But he is not the only one to be given a treat; the *julenek*, a sheaf of oats for the birds, is put up on a pole, and the farm animals get a special Christmas feed.

And then, on Christmas Eve in the afternoon, the church bells start chiming to ring in the Holiday. For this occasion, as for other great feasts, they are not rung in the ordinary way; there is no lazy ding-dong, instead there is an exciting and insistent ding-ding-ding-ding for several minutes as the bell is hit by a rapid succession of blows.

As the sound of the bells dies away, Christmas peace settles over the farms and the villages. Stragglers who have not yet reached their destinations hurry to join relatives and friends while the snow creaks underfoot and light glows from the windows into the dark winter afternoon.

Christmas Celebration Begins—

The Christmas celebration itself begins with the solemn reading of the Christmas Story; a family Bible may be used — perhaps centuries old, with generations of births and baptisms, confirmations and marriages and deaths recorded on its opening pages.

After this the family sits down to the traditional meal, which to a foreigner may seem to contrast strangely with the festive occasion. Usually the main dish is porridge, or — where available — fresh codfish, or *lutefisk*a cured variety of cod - fish. This fare is probably a survival from pre-Reformation times, when Christmas Eve was a day of fast and abstinence. Today, however, the basic fare is usually supplemented with a variety of dishes that have no connection whatever with abstinence; even Norwegian Catholics are given a special dispensation.

But the children do not usually enjoy the meal very much. Their eyes keep turning to the closed living room door, and they grow more and more impatient with the unbearably slow pace with which their elders finish the meal. It seems to them as if an eternity has passed when the big moment arrives and the door to the living room is thrown open.

The children tumble in, only to stop short, awe-struck by the sight of the big tree, aglow with the light from live candles, and with the neatly wrapped gifts heaped underneath.

Then follows a Norwegian ritual known as 'walking around the Christmas tree'. Everybody joins hands to form a ring around the tree, and the company then walks around it singing carols.

At last the gifts are distributed and the children can relax. The rest of the evening is spent with fun and games, and there are cakes and other goodies to be eaten.

Christmas Day—

On the morning of Christmas Day itself the family goes to church. Traditionally there was an early morning service followed by a big breakfast at home. Nowadays the service is later and the traditional meal is a family dinner, usually with pork as the main dish.

But in some communities, at least, the church itself will be the same as in ages past; the same little wooden church that has served the people since the middle ages. There may be twelfth-century runic inscriptions on the time-darkened walls, paintings and carvings done during the centuries since those remote times, and — perhaps too — for those who have ears to hear it — the faint echo of the hundreds of earlier Christmas services when men have lifted their voices in joy at hearing once again the glad tidings. But there is also, in the oldest wooden churches, another reminder of ages past: the chilling draft. No amount of modern electric heating can keep them warm, and on a cold Christmas morning people bring blankets to church and sit in the pews wrapped to their ears to keep from freezing.

Only the Beginning—

But Christmas Eve and Christmas Day or only the beginning of a season of celebration lasting at least to Epiphany, and even in some places until the thirteenth of January — the twentieth day of Christmas, and the feast day of St. Canute. Then, according to a saying 'twentieth-day Canute drives away Christmas'.

It is a season for visiting: visits in some places still made, though only for nostalgic reasons, by horse and sleigh, with the

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tinkle of sleigh-bells ringing out over the snow. It is a season of welcoming, of warm light streaming out of open doors as guests are received — a season of games and merriment when nobody mentions children's bedtimes. It is also a time when the children are allowed to dress up in fancy-dress and to go around from one farm to another, to be treated to cakes and other delicacies wherever they go. The custom is called to go *julebukk* (Christmas goat). The origin is obscure, but there is agreement among the historians that it dates back to the middle ages.

IN THE TOWNS

In the cities and towns today people are tending to simplify the traditional celebrations to some extent. Even so, many of the time-honoured traditions are still kept up.

The gift packages are still opened on Christmas Eve, and there is still carolling around the tree. The traditional foods, the porridge, the lutefisk or regular codfish, the pork dishes, a few kinds of the special small cakes and the julekake are still served, but the more complicated pork dishes have most probably been bought ready-made, and there will be a fair chance that the baked goods have come from a bakery.

However, the custom of paying visits to friends and relatives during the Holiday week is still kept up, and there is also a tradition of Christmas hospitality even to strangers, a feeling that nobody ought to be alone and unhappy on Christmas Eve. And on New Year's Eve there are the midnight services in the churches.

Moreover, the visitor who knows what to look for will soon discover that there is still a distinct Norwegian flavour even in those preparations for the Holiday which he can watch for himself in the city streets.

There is, for one thing, the whiteness, not only the whiteness of the snow, but also the white lights used for decorations so unlike the coloured ones used in many other countries. And there are the traditional Christmas dishes and small cakes, the julegl, the straw decorations and the nisse dolls, all prominently displayed in the stores. He will also find that some of the store window displays have typically Norwegian themes: the nisse sitting in the barn with his bowl or porridge, for instance, or the sheaf of oats full of gaily-coloured birds.

He will, of course, also enjoy sights he might have seen in many other places — the Santa Clauses, the Christmas trees and decorations, the gaiety of the crowds.

But perhaps what a visitor to a Norwegian city during the Christmas season should not miss above all is a sampling of the Christmas buffet of one of the well-known restaurants. He should try the various dishes, the ones he recognizes as well as those he has never encountered before. He should help himself to another serving of the ones he likes, and as he does so he should spare a grateful thought for those medieval ghosts who may well have been responsible for the feast he finds before him!

Christmas Seal designed by Bjorn Wiinblad

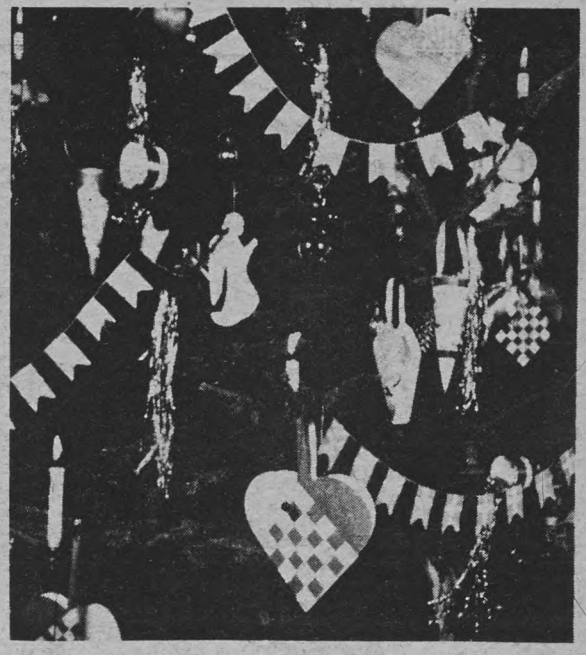
In the language of flowers Mistletoe means 'give me a kiss'. This has its basis in a Scandinavian myth.

Balder received a charm from his mother, Frigga or Freyja, against all injury from everything which sprang from the four elements — fire, water, air and earth. Loki, an evil spirit, having an enmity against Balder, formed an arrow from Mistletoe which did not grow from any of these elements. The arrow was placed in the hands of the blind Helder, whom Loki directed was to launch at the seemingly invulnerable Balder. The Mistletoe dart struck Balder to the ground. The tears of Freyja became the white berries of the Mistletoe.

Through the concerted efforts of the gods, Balder was restored to life, and Freyja decreed that the plant must never again serve as an instrument of mischief.

Freyja, being the goddess of love and beauty, grateful for the return of her son, is said to bestow a kiss upon anyone who shall pass under the Mistletoe.

From this old tale we derive our custom of kissing under the Mistletoe.



Danish flags, paper decorations and candles decorate the Christmas tree

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Honourable Norman Cafik
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Multiculturalism

L'honorable Norman Cafik
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Multiculturalisme

Danish Yule

Every year since 1914 a Christmas tree has been set up in front of Copenhagen's City Hall

In Denmark the Christmas season actually begins on the first day of December. On that date the children of all ages open up their Christmas calendars and light a calendar candle. This candle is marked with 24 lines — one for each day until Christmas.

On Advent Sunday the first candle is lit in the Adventskrans — a round wreath of spruce decorated with ribbons, fir cones, red berries and four candles — one for each Sunday until Christmas.

All through December you will see illuminated trees everywhere — in gardens, on balconies, in the streets and squares, in shops, theatres, kindergartens, schools, even on top of the tallest buildings and in the masts of ships. And, of course, all the department stores have Christmas displays.

Hygge is this special kind of cheerfulness and fireside coziness that no Dane can do without, and of course the Christmas spirit inspires most people to make their homes even more cozy with decorations, candles, *nisser* (pixies), embroidered table cloths, and special Christmas plants such as poinsettia, which the Danes, incidentally, call a Christmas Star.

In the homes the fir tree is decorated the day before Christmas Eve with colourful paper decorations that have long since been cut and pasted or woven together during cozy December evenings.

CHRISTMAS EVE

The Danes observe Christmas Eve which is the big family event of the year.

Work ceases in the afternoon, and at 4:00 p.m. church bells in town and throughout the country begin to chime, summoning people to worship in candlelit churches decorated with greens.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

The traditional Christmas dinner is roast goose or duck stuffed with apples and prunes, or roast pork, served with red cabbage, pickled gherkins, cowberry jam and small glazed potatoes.

Dessert is ris a l'amande (rice cooked in milk and mixed with whipped cream and chopped almonds). One almond, though, is not chopped, and whoever finds it (invariably one of the children) wins a small prize, usually a marzipan baby pig.

After dinner expectations are high. First the candles on the Christmas tree are lit, after which everyone takes one another by the hand and walks around the tree singing some of the old Christmas hymns such as *Glade Jul, Dejlige Jul* (Silent Night).

Finally, after everyone has had the opportunity to choose his favourite, gaily wrapped gifts are exchanged. Sometimes the *Julemand* himself has brought the gifts (a member of the family having dressed up as Santa Claus with long white beard and red cap).

After all the excitement is over, refreshments and cookies of all sorts and shapes are served. Typical Danish Christmas cookies are pebernoedder (peppernuts) and klejner (crullers).

CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25th is generally celebrated with the family at home, with all theatres and most restaurants closed, whereas December 26th, also a holiday, calls for more outside activities; that evening is usually a big night in the entertainment world.

The calendar candle helps the children in Denmark to keep track of 'how many days until Christmas'.

Season's Greetings!

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Glade jul, Hellige Jul!

Glade jul, hellige jul!
engler daler ned i skjul.
Hit de flyver med paradisgrønt:
Hvor de ser hva for Gud
er skjønt,
:/: lønnlig iblant oss de går :/:

Julefryd, evig fryd,
hellig sang med himmelsk lyd!
Det er engler som hyrdene så
dengang Herren i krybben lå,
:/: evig er englenes sang :/:

Fred på jord, fryd på jord,
Jesusbarnet iblant oss bor!
Engler synger om barnet
så smukt,
han har himmelens dør opplukt.
:/: Salig er englenes sang. :/:

Salig fred, himmelsk fred
toner julenatt her ned.
Engler bringer til store
og små
bud om ham som i krybben lå –
:/: Fryd deg hver sjel han
har frelst! :/:

Deilig er jorden

Deilig er jorden,
prektig er Guds himmel,
skjønn er sjelenes
pilgrimsgang
gjennom de fagre
riker på jorden
går vi til paradis med sang!

Tider skal komme,
tider skal henrulle,
slekt skal følge slekters
gang.
Aldri forstummer
toner fra himmelen
i sjelens glade pilgrimssang!

Englene sang den
først for markens hyrder;
skjønt fra sjel til sjel
det lød:
Fred over jorden,
menneske fryd deg!
Oss er en evig Frelser født.

Et barn er født i Betlehem

Et barn er født i Betlehem,
i Betlehem
ti gleder seg Jerusalem.
Halleluja, Halleluja!

Han lagdes i et krybberom,
et krybberom,
Guds engler sang med fryd
derom.
Halleluja, Halleluja!

Av Saba kom de konger tre,
de konger tre,
gull, røkels, myrra ofret de.
Halleluja, Halleluja!

Lov, takk og pris i evighet,
i evighet,
den hellige Trefoldighet,
Halleluja, Halleluja!

Jeg er så glad hver julekveld

Jeg er så glad hver julekveld
for da ble Jesus født;
da lyste stjernen som en sol,
og engler sang så sott.

Det lille barn i Betlehem,
han var en konge stor
som kom fra himmelens høye
slott
ned til vår arme jord.

Nå bor han høyt i himmerik,
han er Guds egen Sønn,
men husker alltid på de sma
og hører deres bønn.

Jeg er så glad hver julekveld,
da synger vi hans pris:
da åpner han for alle små
sitt søte paradis.

Da tenner moder alle lys,
så ingen krok er mørk;
hun sier stjernen lyste så
i hele verdens ork.

Hun sier at den lyser enn
og slukner aldri ut,
og hvis den skinner på
min vei,
da kommer jeg til Gud.

Jeg holder av vår julekveld
og av den Herre Krist,
og at han elsker meg igjen,
det vet jeg ganske visst.

Jeg synger julekvad

Jeg synger julekvad,
jeg er så glad, så glad!
Min hjertens Jesus hviler
i stall og krybbe trang,
som solen klare smiler
Han på sin moders fang,
:/: Han er frelser min! :/:

O Jesus, du barnlill,
deg lenges jeg så til!
Kom, trøst meg alle sinne,
tred inn om her er
smått,
la meg deg se å finne,
å, da har jeg det godt
:/: Drag meg etter deg! :/:

Deilig er den himmel blå

Deilig er den himmel blå,
lyst det er å se derpå,
hvor de gyldne stjerner blinker,
hvor de smiler, hvor de vinker,
:/: oss fra jorden opp til seg :/:

Det var midt i julenatt,
hver en stjerne blinket matt,
da med ett der ble å skue
en så klar på himlens bue,
:/: som en liten stjernesol:/:

Når den stjerne, lys og
blid,
lot seg se ved midnattstid,
var det varslet i Guds rike
at en konge uten like
:/: skulle fødes på vår jord :/:

Stjernen ledet vise menn
til den Herre Kristus hen;
vi har og en lederstjerne,
og når vi den følger gjerne,
:/: kommer vi til Jesus Krist. :/:

Denne stjerne lys og mild,
som kan aldri lede vill,
er hans guddomsord det klare,
som han lot oss åpenbare
:/: for å lyse for vår fot. :/:

Kimer i klokker

Kimer i klokker, ja, kimer før
dag i det dunkle!
Tindrer i stjerner, som englenes
øyne kan funkle!
Fred kom til jord,
Himmelens fred med Guds e.l.,
æren er Guds i det høye!

Julen er kommet med solhverv
for hjertene bange,
jul med Gudsbarnet i svøp under
englenes sange!
Kommer fra Gud,
bringer oss glederikt bud,
æren er Guds i det høye!

Synger og leker og klapper i
eders små hender.
Menneskebarnene alle til
jorderiks ender!
Født er i dag
Barnet til Guds velbehag,
æren er Guds i det høye!

Du grønne, glitrende tre

Du grønne, glitrende tre, goddag!
Velkommen du som vi ser så gjerne,
med julelys og med norske flagg
og høyt i toppen den blanke stjerne!
Ja, den må skinne, ja den må skinne
for den skal minne, for den skal minne
oss om vår Gud, oss om vår Gud.

Den første jul i et fremmed land,
sin store stjerne Vårherre tente:
den skulle vise vår jord at han
den lille Jesus til verden sendte.
I stjerneglansen, i stjerneglansen
gikk engledansen, gikk engledansen
om Betlehem, om Betlehem.

Om Jesusbarnet fortalte mor
så mangen aften vi satt der hjemme,
vi kan hans bud og hans milde ord,
vi vet at aldri vi dem må glemme.
Når stjernen skinner, når stjernen skinner
om ham oss minner, om ham oss minner
vårt juletre, vårt juletre.

Og reven rasker over isen

Og reven rasker over isen.
Og reven rasker over isen.
Så får vi lov, så får vi lov
å synge damenes vise.
Og ser du damene hvor de går.
Og ser du damene hvor de går,
og hvor de sitter og hvor de står,
og hvor de svinger seg i valsen.

:/: Og reven rasker over isen :/:
Så får vi lov, så får vi lov
å synge herrenes vise.
/: Og ser du herrene hvor de går, :/
og hvor de sitter og hvor de står,
og hvor de svinger seg i valsen.

/: Og reven rasker over isen.:/
Så får vi lov, så får vi lov
å synge jentenes vise.
/: og ser du jentene hvor de går,
og hvor de sitter og hvor de står,
og hvor de svinger seg i valsen.

/: Og reven rasker over isen.:/
Så får vi lov, så får vi lov
å synge guttenes vise.
/: Og ser du guttene, osv.

O Jul med din glede

O jul med din glede og
barnlige lyst
vi ønsker deg alle velkommen;
vi helser deg alle med
jublende røst
titusinde ganger velkommen!
Vi klapper i hendene,
vi synger og vi ler
så glad er vi, så glad er vi,
vi svinger oss i kretsen
og neier,
Og bukker.

Så rekker jeg deg nu med
glede min hånd,
vi vet jo hvorhen I skal drage;
ti vi ville også så gjerne derhen
og eder på reisen ledsage.
Vi kapper osv.
Så rekker jeg deg nu med
glede min hånd,
kom, skynd deg å gi med
den annen
så knytter vi kjærlighets
hellige band
og lover å elske hinannen.
Vi klapper osv.

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk,
enebærbusk, enebærbusk.
Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk,
tidlig en mandag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi vasker vårt tøy,
vasker vårt tøy, vasker vårt tøy.
Så gjør vi så når vi vasker vårt tøy,
tidlig en mandag morgen.

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk osv.
tidlig en tirsdag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi skyller vårt tøy osv.
tidlig en tirsdag morgen.

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk osv.
tidlig en onsdag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi vrir opp vårt tøy osv.
tidlig en onsdags morgen

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk osv.
tidlig en torsdag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi henger opp vårt tøy osv.
tidlig en torsdags morgen.

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk osv.
tidlig en fredag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi stryker vårt tøy osv.
tidlig en fredag morgen.

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk osv.
tidlig en lørdag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi vasker vårt gulv osv.
tidlig en lørdag morgen.

Så går vi rundt om en enebærbusk osv.
tidlig en søndag morgen.

Så gjør vi så når vi hentar vi går osv.
tidlig en søndag morgen.

Next Deadline January 9

DANISH CONSULATE
Consul - Donn Larsen
10183 - 112 Street
Edmonton, Alberta. T5K 1M1
PHONE: 426-1457
OFFICE HOURS
10 a.m. - 12 noon; 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

FINNISH CONSULATE
Consul - Christian Graefe
Main Floor, Macdonald Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta
Phone: 426-7865
OFFICE HOURS
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

NORWEGIAN CONSULATE
Consul - Arne Johannessen
6003 - 102A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
Phone: 466-0478
OFFICE HOURS
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

BULLETIN BOARD

14220 - 125 Ave

A FRIENDLY PLACE TO MEET FOR ALL FUNCTIONS —

FOR BOOKINGS
Phone the Office 453-5145 & 453-5146

BROWN CARDIGAN SWEATER
left in the Viking Room on October 28 after Vasa's Smorgasbord
Can be picked up at the Centre.

WELCOME
To Christmas Services in
ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
10759 - 96 Street, Edmonton, Alberta. T5H 2J7
Pastors: H.W. Gutsche, E. Duesterhoeft
Telephone: 422-0059 and 456-9553
English Worship Service every **Sunday** at **11:00 a.m.**
December 24 - 4th Sunday in Advent
English Service at 11:00 a.m.
December 24 - Christmas Eve - English Service at **7:00 p.m.**
Candlelight Service; Sunday School Play
Psalm 89:1 Lord, I will sing of your love forever

DANISH TRADE OFFICE
Joergen Windfeldt
2702 C. N. Tower
10004-104 Avenue,
Edmonton, Alberta. T5J OK1
Phone: 424-6191
OFFICE HOURS
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

FOR ALL TYPES OF MUSIC, CALL
GREENRIDGE
Country - Rock - Polka - Etc.
DAVE: 462-8067 ♫

If you want your Thomas Organ for Christmas
BetterBuyItNow
A Very Merry Christmas To All
Stan Hafso
J.M.J.
Music Center
Meadowlark Shopping Centre

DANIA'S ANNUAL NEW YEARS PARTY
SATURDAY, JANUARY 6 - 7:00 P.M.
at the Scandinavian Centre
SMØRREBRØD AND SILD
DANCING TO THE SOUND MERCHANTS
Members: $12.00 **Non-Members: $14.00**

ALL THE BEST
FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON
AND THE COMING NEW YEAR
WALTER MEYER
VICTOR LOSA JEWELLERS
12726 - 82 Street, Edmonton Ph: 478-5877

LISTEN TO . . . **THE SCANDINAVIAN HOUR**
ON RADIO STATION CKUA AT 5:30 P.M.
AM 580 Kz. — FM 94.9 Mz.
Sunday
December 31; January 9, 23
DANISH 5:30 - 5:50 p.m. • **NORWEGIAN** 5:50 - 6:10 p.m
SWEDISH 6:10 - 6:30 p.m.

GIFT Subscription

PLEASE SEND THE SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE NEWS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR TO -
Name .....
Address .....
Postal Code .....
ENCLOSE PAYMENT OF $6.00 FOR THE ABOVE GIFT SUBSCRIPTION
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Address .....
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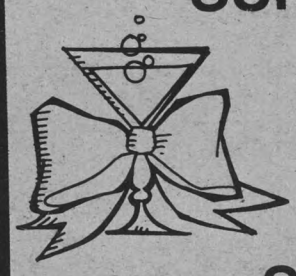
NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

sponsored by Club Viking

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31



7 P.M. TO 2 A.M.

At the Scandinavian Centre

SMORGASBORD BY BØRGE VELLING

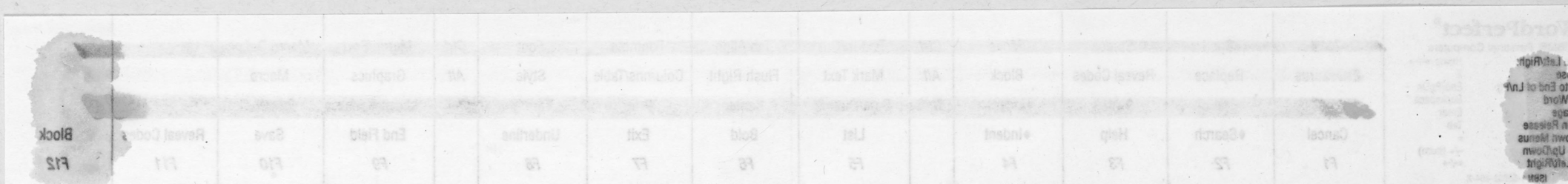
Dancing to the music of Al Brault

SPECIAL LATE LUNCH

Hats – Noisemakers – Novelties – Fun

$25 Per Person

TICKETS MUST BE PICKED UP AT THE CENTRE BY DECEMBER 19, 1978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